

HONORING MR. ROBERT WAGNER

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Mr. Robert Wagner, a resident of California's 27th Congressional District. Mr. Wagner has recently been honored by his alma mater, Georgetown University, with the renaming of the University's Alumni House, the Robert M. Wagner Alumni House.

Robert Wagner was born in Perth Amboy, N.J. but raised in both Iowa and California during the Great Depression. In 1940, at age 16, Mr. Wagner was called to serve in World War II and during boot camp found enough time to earn his GED. Upon completion of his service, he was accepted as a student at Georgetown University on the GI Bill.

It was at Georgetown, Mr. Wagner says, that he learned the skills that have made him a success. His professors, course work and classmates, all played a role in both his professional success in the years after his graduation, and his dedication to the school which helped him to achieve some of his life's greatest successes.

His dedication to Georgetown is legendary. Over the past 33 years, he has volunteered to interview Georgetown applicants, founded the Georgetown University Alumni Association of Southern California, and has endowed five scholarships to benefit financially needy students. In addition to scholarships, Mr. Wagner has made unrestricted gifts to the Georgetown Annual Fund and endowed the Carroll Quigley Lecture Series, which brings experts in international affairs to the University.

Most recently, Mr. Wagner endowed both a charitable remainder unitrust and a charitable lead trust. Both trusts will support the reconstruction, renovation and maintenance of the newly designated Robert M. Wagner Alumni House.

Such dedication to the educational institution which served him so well is admirable and it is with great pleasure that I ask all Members to join me in congratulating Mr. Robert Wagner upon his being bestowed this great honor by Georgetown University.

TRIBUTE TO JACK STEWART

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. FARR of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a true public servant, a man who has touched literally thousands of lives. Jack Stewart, who is currently the Monterey County Military and Veterans Affairs Officer and a long-time constituent of mine, will be retiring from the post he created in 1983 after a career that has been marked by excellence and dedication.

Jack first served in the U.S. Army in 1954, eventually serving 20 years and receiving several decorations and awards including the Combat Infantryman Badge, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Good Conduct Medal. Mr. Speak-

er, these commendations obviously show the level of commitment he had to defending and protecting the democratic ideals our country cherishes, but it is only the beginning of what would become a career dedicated to those who, like himself, served their country with honor.

As a county supervisor, I got to know Jack and understand the workings of his office, which helped us both when I became a California State Assemblyman. When the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers (which Jack served three terms as president) came to Sacramento I was always there for Jack, as he was for me. Jack was always a welcome sight in my office, and I know other counties were envious of the relationship and understanding that we had.

One of the highlights of my work with Jack during those years was helping him bring a replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall to Monterey County, a deeply moving experience. This project was one of the best instances of veterans coming together with the community, including anti-war leaders, in an outpouring of love and respect for those who didn't come home. This was the first listing of all Monterey County MIA's and those killed in action, which led to the creation of a separate Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Salinas. It also provided for listing those names on the state memorial in Capitol Park in Sacramento, including my cousin John Geisen and Carmel High School classmate Andrew Elliot, who is MIA. For Jack's work on these projects, I am personally grateful.

Mr. Speaker, many people will undoubtedly sing Jack Stewart's many praises as his retirement nears, but I must mention a few things that he has done while I have been a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. Perhaps the single most influential role he had was during the closure of Fort Ord in Monterey County, the largest base closure in US history. The economic and social implications on the local communities were astounding, but Jack made sure that the interests of the veterans in the area were attended to. He had the world pulled out from him, as we lost a four hundred-bed hospital that served both active duty members and retirees; the CHAMPUS provider was to be switched so no one knew who to go to for health care; disabled vets were stranded without transportation; and all military personnel who could help handle such a crisis were gone. The only person left was Jack, who, with his staff had to do the work of an entire division.

Out of this chaos, he will be leaving behind a new clinic run by the Department of Veterans Affairs, serving a broader community than ever; a new Post Traumatic Stress Disorder Counseling Program; a Veterans Transition Center for homeless veterans and a transportation network that provides van rides to disabled veterans. Jack was also able to get the federal government to put up land and money to open a state-run veterans' cemetery at Fort Ord, and has been instrumental in starting and running the local process for making this a reality. Of course, this is a project that will continue without Jack, but he should be honored for his role in moving this from an idea to where it is today.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close today by saying that Jack Stewart has handled more challenges than any county veterans officer I know of, and produced a more lasting legacy

of services than anyone. This alone speaks volumes, but I hope I have been able to show how much he will be missed, not only by me, but also by the community at large. I wish Jack and his family all of the best in retirement, even though I know that he will remain an active part of the veteran's community.

THANKING MY CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

HON. GEORGE W. GEKAS

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, on November 19, 2002, I submitted remarks thanking my congressional staff. Inadvertently, several lines from those remarks were not included in that CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. I here resubmit those missing lines which thanked Phil Jodz and Mike Rule on my staff for their contributions to my incumbency.

The end of a congressional career brings about many emotions. Over the last 20 years I have happily spent representing the fine people of the 17th Congressional District of Pennsylvania I have had the pleasure of working with thousands of constituents, local, state and federal officials, and many former and current distinguished members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. To all of them I say, thanks for working with me towards a better America.

And, of course, every Member of Congress works with many, many competent staff, from the staff in their own personal offices to the committee and subcommittee staff and the leadership and floor staff. It has often been said that without staff where would this institution be? And I concur with that statement, for without the many fine staff with whom I have had the good fortune to work, I and other Members of Congress of the United States would be far worse off.

Phil Jodz, is the many talented staff assistant who handled constituent tours and interns, and also ably handled press, legislative research, the office website, and all manner of writing in my office. Mike Rule, our newest staff assistant, showed a willingness, and more importantly a capability, to do whatever was needed to assist the office.

To both I say please accept my sincere thanks for making my tenure in the U.S. House of Representatives a productive and pleasant one. Any current Member of Congress or committee would be well served by the high-quality staff with whom it has been my pleasure to work over these many years.

CONCERNS WITH THE PAKISTANI PARLIAMENT'S RELIGIOUS BLOC

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 22, 2002

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to express my concerns regarding the Pakistani Parliament and in particular, the efforts of the Islamic alliance to form a governing coalition in Parliament with either the King's Party, led by President